



**WRITTEN STATEMENT**

**OF**

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**DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY**

**BEFORE THE**

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY**  
**SUBCOMMITTEE ON MANAGEMENT, INTEGRATION**  
**AND OVERSIGHT**

**THE 9/11 REFORM ACT:**  
**EXAMINING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF**  
**THE HUMAN SMUGGLING AND TRAFFICKING CENTER**

**Wednesday, March 8, 2006**  
**311 Cannon House Office Building**

Chairman Rogers, Ranking Member Meek and distinguished members of the subcommittee, it is an honor for me to appear before you today to share the Department of Homeland Security's role in the implementation of the Human Smuggling and Trafficking Center (Center) and the Department's commitment to its critical mission.

Criminal travel networks pose a threat to our national security by providing a readily available conduit through which persons potentially seeking to harm United States interests can enter our country. These networks, primarily engaged in human smuggling and trafficking in persons, rely on highly effective transnational alliances involving service providers such as recruiters, brokers, document manufacturers, transporters and corrupt government officials. To effectively cripple these criminal travel networks at source and transit countries, as well as in the United States, interagency cooperation and information exchange are of the utmost importance.

To this end, in July 2004, the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Homeland Security and the Attorney General created the Human Smuggling and Trafficking Center. In December 2004, the Congress formalized the establishment of the Center in Section 7202 of the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004.

Since its inception, the Department of Homeland Security has fully supported this very important interagency venture. The Department, through a senior manager from U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), served as the first director of the Center. In recognition of our continuing commitment to the Center, DHS has forwarded the nomination of another ICE executive to the steering group for consideration. In addition, DHS Assistant Secretary Randy Beardsworth has been involved in guiding the Center by serving as Co-Chair and as the Senior DHS representative to the Center's Steering Group.

The Department of Homeland Security has contributed a significant and expanding presence at the Center. In FY 05, DHS had six representatives assigned to the Center. ICE had five full-time personnel from the Offices of Investigations and Intelligence and the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) assigned one intelligence analyst. In FY 06, the ICE personnel assigned to the Center will reach seven representatives: six investigators, one of which will be the Center Director, and one intelligence analyst. Analysts from DHS's Office of Intelligence and Analysis (I&A), and the USCG are planning to assign additional personnel to the Center to enhance the Center's capabilities.

With respect to budget for the Center, the Department has entered into a cost reimbursement agreement with the Departments of State and Justice to address operating expenses for fiscal years 2005 and 2006. The Center and its stakeholders continue to work to identify the scope of the Center's long-term resource needs.

The Center has made significant achievements, including meeting statutory requirements of the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004, such as the President's 180-Day Report to Congress relating to the establishment of the Human Smuggling and Trafficking Center and the Vulnerabilities Assessment produced jointly with the National Counter-Terrorism Center. The latter product focused on vulnerabilities in the U.S. and international travel systems that can be exploited by terrorists, smugglers and human traffickers.

In addition to meeting statutory requirements, the Center has produced valuable intelligence assessments of countries in Latin America and Asia as well as an assessment of the Document Fraud industry in a specific country. As part of the Security and Prosperity Partnership, a trilateral initiative between the governments of Mexico, Canada and the United States, the Center was tasked to conduct a joint U.S./Canada assessment on Trafficking in Persons.

From the perspective of the Department, the Center has been providing strategic, operational and tactical information as well as analytical support, which have supported ICE human smuggling investigations and have resulted in the disruption and/or dismantling of criminal travel networks engaged in the movement of foreign nationals of special interest to the United States.

I would like to summarize some of these contributions with the understanding that some of the locations have been generalized due to the ongoing nature of the investigations and the nature of the Center's support to us. For example, the Center provided valuable support for an ICE investigation conducted by one of our field offices in the northeastern United States that focused on a travel network engaged in the smuggling of Indian nationals through the Caribbean and South America. The investigation disclosed that these smugglers had engaged in the illegal movement of Special Interest Aliens. Both smugglers were indicted and are in U.S. custody at this time.

In a recent event, a flagless fishing vessel transporting over 100 migrants capsized in the Pacific Ocean off the coast of South America while en route to Central America. The Center rapidly provided tactical information to ICE investigators that had deployed to South America to assist the host government in the criminal investigation. The collaborative effort of both governments led to the arrest by the foreign authorities of the smuggler responsible for the tragedy.

During an ICE human smuggling investigation, the Center provided intelligence information that was shared with a foreign government. The foreign government detained the ICE suspect in accordance with international law. The detention of the subject allow both the United States and the foreign government to use the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime; specifically, the Protocol Against the Smuggling of Migrants, for the first time for both countries and make an extradition to the United States legally possible. The extradition has been granted, although it is still pending appeal by the subject in that country. The subject was identified as a member of a criminal organization engaged in the smuggling of Albanian and Macedonian nationals. This criminal organization procured fraudulent travel documents to facilitate the movement of foreign nationals through Europe and South America, with the United States as the ultimate destination.

Lastly, in the Global Trafficking in Persons (G-TIP) program, the Department works cooperatively with the Departments of State and Justice. ICE manages some of the G-TIP projects with the overall goal of building foreign government capacity to increase the effectiveness of their anti-trafficking law enforcement efforts. Additionally, ICE seeks to develop and conduct joint bilateral investigations to dismantle criminal organizations engaged in the trafficking in persons. The ICE Office of Investigations provides oversight, guidance and

support to ongoing ICE criminal trafficking and child sex tourism investigations, both domestically and internationally. ICE coordinates and shares information and intelligence with the Center. The Department participates in the Senior Policy Operating Group (SPOG) and on the Peer Review Panel, both established by the President's TIP Initiative. The ICE TIP efforts are provided to and included in the semiannual Department of State G-TIP POTUS Initiative Program Status Report, and to the Attorney General's Annual Report to Congress on the U.S. Government Efforts to Combat Trafficking in Persons.

In conclusion, the Center brings together federal agency representatives from the policy, law enforcement, intelligence and diplomatic arenas to work together to achieve increased progress in addressing the problems of human smuggling, human trafficking and clandestine terrorist mobility. The Department is committed to supporting the Center. Its success enhances the Department's capabilities to address these criminal threats and exploitable vulnerabilities.

The men and women of DHS are grateful for the chance to serve the American people and on their behalf, I thank you and your colleagues for your continued support of the Department and the Human Smuggling and Trafficking Center.

I would be pleased to answer your questions.